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Amendment

Remarks

This amendment is in response to the office action mailed January 14, 2004 in which claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Blaeser US 6168617. Claims 1, 2 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Savin US 4950227 in view of Konya US 6123723.

In response, applicant has amended claims 1 and 8 to require that the at least one lubricant application port is connected to a supply of lubricant. Support for this amendment may be found in the specification as filed, at page 5, lines 10-12 and page 5, lines 20-22.

None of the applied patents disclose connecting their respective ports (hydraulic perfusion port 60 in Blaeser or fluid opening 51 through which contrast material may flow in Konya) to a supply of lubricant. Because claims 1 and 8 now affirmatively require this structural limitation, claim 1 cannot be anticipated by Blaeser, nor can claims 1, 2 and 8 be met by the combination of Savin and Konya.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1, 2 and 8 are pending in the application, while claims 3-7 and 9 are withdrawn from consideration. The amendments made to claims 1 and 8 distinguish over the applied patents, either alone or in combination. The allowance of claims 1, 2 and 8 is requested.

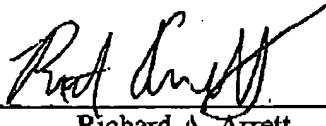
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Respectfully submitted,

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